



# NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture • Rural Development

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## USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT HELPS COUPLE REALIZE AMERICAN DREAM

*"Home, sweet home"*

**Maddock, June 28, 2006.** . . . Clare Carlson, State Director for USDA Rural Development in North Dakota, and other Rural Development staff members, today visited the home of Kristin and Michael Jones to personally congratulate and honor them in recognition of June as National Homeownership Month.

The visit is part of a series of events held throughout the nation by USDA Rural Development in celebration of June as National Homeownership Month and President George W. Bush's initiative to increase homeownership opportunities.

"These homeowners, with their hard work and our efforts, together, help President Bush's Five Star Commitment on increasing minority homeownership throughout the country," Carlson said. "Our congratulations go out to Kristin and Michael for enduring all challenges and obstacles they faced while achieving the dream of homeownership."



The story of Kristin and Michael is no different from any other American family wanting to own their own home and a yard where they can enjoy the privacy and have space for their two pets.

Following many years of renting, Kristin and Michael decided they wanted to own their own home. After reading about Rural Development's housing program from a poster hanging in their local post office, they contacted the local Rural Development office and completed an application. Kristin and Michael Jones purchased a single-family ranch style home and qualified as first-time home buyers using Rural Development's 502 Direct Loan program. The home, being recently remodeled both inside and out, will be maintenance free for many years to come.

Committed to the future of rural communities.

"USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender."

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In honor of Kristin and Michael, a seven-foot Malus Wealthy Apple tree is planted in the family's yard. This tree is cold-hardy, small in size, and usually bears alternate years. Its fruit is red, large, has somewhat rough skin, and can be used for either eating or baking.

Our thanks go out to Northern Plains RC&D for donating the tree, and to Jill Haakenson, RC&D Coordinator, for her assistance in obtaining the tree for this special occasion.

In Fiscal Year 2005, USDA Rural Development provided over **\$79.8 million** in loan and grant financing to North Dakota citizens.

USDA Rural Development is the lead federal entity for rural economic and community development needs. It administers financial and technical assistance through a network of state Rural Development offices, various non-profit and educational institutional partners, and its national office.

Further information on these and other rural programs is available at a local USDA Rural Development office or by visiting USDA's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>.

